THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICK CHURCH AND HER MIRACLES,

Defended againſt Dr Stillingfleets Cavils, Unworthily made publick In two late Books,

The one called, An Anſwer to Several Treatiſes &c,

The other, à Vindication of the Proteſtant Grounds of Faith, Againſt the Pretence of Infallibility,

IN THE ROMAN CHVRCH &c.

BY E. W.

The firſt Part.

ANTWERP,

Printed by MICHAEL CNOBBAERT, at the Sign of. S. Peter in the Year. 1674.

Permiſſu Superiorum.

THE PREFACE

Ine years, or there about, are pas't, Since Dr Edward Stillingfleet set forth à voluminous book, entitu-led, A rational Account of the grounds of Proteſtant Religion, *and expoſed it, to the view and examination of others. Many both learned and judicious, have in their ſeveral latter works, diſcovered here and there, no Small, but great Errours in it. Among the reſt, one worthy man not ſcared with the fearful bulk of the book, fixed upon the* whole, *engaged to examin it, and to return the Dr à full, juſt, and compleat Anſwer, but it pleaſed God to call him out of this world before he ſaw an end of his labours. While he yet lived buſy at work, I ventured upon the chiefeſt Points of Controverſy handled by the Dr, not willing to meddle with the whole book, becauſe another had it in hand. I thought then, and do ſo ſtill, that Dr Stillingfleet came much too short of à right Reckoning in his Account, and therefore plainly laid down his Miſtakes and errours in two Treatiſes.* Proteſtancy without Principles. Reaſon and Religion &c. *Ever ſince, year after year, I expected the good hour, when Mr*

Printed Anno 1663

The one Printed Anno 1668 The other, 1672

Dr would please to just Accounts with me, for he had been long in debt, and give (like a good Correspondent) satisfaction to the many exceptions I made against his Account. At last, two other books containing his after Reckonings appear, not like the grand volume Bulkie, and so far praise worthy, who ever saies more to their commendation loses credit with me. When these books came to my hands, one long after the other (the distance of place would have it so) I read all, and examined every particular diligently, still hoping, as I went along to find the Dr more rational, and better at his Reckonings now then he had been in his former Writings, but after an exact perusal, I saw clearly my hopes frustrated, and Dr Still just like himselfe, not only unmethodical, but besides a meer Shuffler in the main matter he was obliged to give Account of, as will be made out hereafter. The first of his volumes is called. An answer to several Treatises, occasioned by a book &c. The other beares the name of a Discourse, in vindication of the Protestant grounds of Faith, against the pretence of Infallibility in the Roman Church, in Answer to the Guide of Controversies by. R. H. Protestancy without Principles and Reason and Religion, or the certain Rule of Faith by. E. W. with a particular Enquiry into the Miracles of the Roman Church. A

these Treatiſes, where Mr Dr should have made a right Reckoning with his Creditors, (those I mean who truſted him with the beſt wares they had) he in recompence fall's into bitter fits of paſſion, and railing at them, One is blind, another has neither fear nor wit, à third is à popish Leviathan &c. And thus hurried on (you shall have the liſt of his obloquies more compleat presently) he thinks not one only, but all he deals with halfe martyred by him, and that none has more felt the weight of his heavy hand, than E. W. To give the man his due, if curſt language can kill one, he has behaved himſelfe ſtoutly, and knock't E. W. down (more like à Wood-river with à beetle, than à Scholar by ſtrong Arguments) à hundred times over, yet thanks be to God. E W. is alive, well able to keep Accounts with the Dr, whoſe furious Doings and feeble pen Labour, he fear's not. For proof hereof, I remit you, Gentle Reader, to the following Treatiſe. Peruſe and cenſure freely; I appeal to your Iudgement.

Se the Dr's general Preface

In the mean while, it will not methinks be amiſs, for the better clearing of Accounts between the Dr and me, to preacquaint you with ſome few, yet real exceptions, I juſtly make againſt an very ill Reſpondent. A main one is, that as you ſe by the Dr's Title, he pretend's to anſwer my two laſt Books already named, whereas the Contrary is evident, and proved in

this Treatiſe. He anſwers nothing, *nor ſo much as offer's to meddle with ſuch matters as are deſervedly eſteemed by all Polemical Writers the moſt ſubſtantial, or of greateſt concern. For example. I told the Dr as plainly as any man can ſpeak, that never Book merited leſs the Title, than his* Rational Account of the grounds of Proteſtant Religion, *and upon this very account I excepted, both againſt the* Book *and Author, and ſaid, that the Dr never yet went about to tell us, what is meant* by his Proteſtancy, *much leſs to ſettle one Tenet of it upon any* Principle, expreſs Scripture, univerſal Tradition, or the Authority of any Church held Orthodox by the Chriſtian world. *Not a word of anſwer hath the Dr returned to this moſt juſt and urgent exception. Beſides I told him, that his Proteſtancy which he ſuppoſes well grounded, want's the very* Eſſence of Religion, *and conſequently ſubſiſt's upon no grounds; and that in Proteſtancy, as it is diſtinguiſhed from Catholick Religion, and all known condemned Hereſies, there is not ſo much as one Article revealed by Almighty God, taught by any Orthodox Church or Judged by the Profeſſors of this* Novelty, *neceſſary to Salvation. This I thought, and think ſtill, a charge very Material, yet Mr Dr waves it, not becauſe he deem's it little (for nothing can be more de-*

Reaſ and Relig: 1. c. 20. and Diſc. 3. c. 18.

ſtructive

ſtructive to Proteſtancy) but becauſe hè knowes not what to anſwer. Yet more. Proteſtants grant, and ſo far the Dr ſides with them, that the Roman Catholick Church once pure in Faith, ſincerely conveyed to poſterity the great Myſteries concerning Chriſtian Religion, of the ſacred Trinity, the Incarnation, *the* Reſurrection of the dead *&c, but ſay withall, that after ſo much good ſervice done, She perverſly brought in, and publickly taught (contrary to truth) many both new and dangerous doctrins,* Tranſubſtantiation, Invocation of Saints, *and* Purgatory, *with à mighty deluge of other groſs errours. I have amply proved this charge of errours, and change of Religion, entring à whole Church, to be utterly impoſsible, and rely upon an undubitable Principle. Viz. Theſe Suppoſed Novelties being plain matters of Fact, could never get into Chriſtianity, without* publick Defence *in thoſe who firſt broached them, and* publick Reſiſtance *in others, that (had they been errours)* publickly oppoſed them; *but never Since Chriſt's time, was there any ſuch publick defence, or publick oppoſition as is largely proved in the place now cited. Here I add one Conſideration more. Sectaries who lay this foul aſperſion on the Church muſt Iudge the whole body of Chriſtians,* Princes, Prelates *and* People, *all over* Germany, Italy, Spain, France, *and* England *&c ſtark madd at once, that*

Proteſt: without Princ: Diſc, 3. C. 13. n. 5.

that is, to have unanimously conspired in a beliefe of Transubstantiation, (*for example*) *never held before, and this is as great a Paradox, as if you should suppose, that Catholicks now, might universally agree in one beliefe, and stedfastly maintain, that the Water in Baptism is really Christ's sacred blood as worthy Adoration, as a Consecrated Chalice is; yet (and here is the wonder) no man, forsooth, must be thought to take the least Notice of so universal a dotage, nor of the prodigious change made in Christian Religion by it. Tell me, Courteous Reader, were such a Novelty brought this present year into the Church, would not Iewes, Turks, Heathens and all Hereticks (if none els did it) raise loud Clamours against the great body of Christians, observe all that's done, and jeer at us in the publick Streets? On the other side, if Sectaries say, these supposed Innovations were first begun by Some few, two or three in corners, got growth in time, and at last became believed Articles of Faith all over the Christian World; I answer, this is more impossible, yea the greatest Chimæra Imaginable. Viz. That such gross Novelties should steal into a Church, and be publickly taught by a few, without opposition or notice taken by other sound Christians, far more numerous and learned (for now we suppose, all ran not mad at once). Here also the Instance already given, has the like force. Should a few men in a town or City publickly*

teach

teach that the Water in Baptiſm is Chriſt's real blood, would not the whole Body of ſound Chriſtians, both cenſure and decry the errour as horrid and blaſphemous? Nothing can be more evident. Beſides, all know, how exact the Church of Chriſt has been in condemning Hereſies as they roſe up, the time when they began, and the Perſons that introduced them, remain ſtill upon record, but here are Novelties ſpoken of, and unworthily charged upon a whole Church, yet huſh! *All paſſed in ſilence, no man mentions them, no Author friend or Enemy left them upon Record. The Dr may remember, how he impugn's that matter of fact concerning the miraculous Tranſlation* of the houſe of Loreto *from Nazareth, where he tells us, becauſe three Authors,* Dantes, Petrach, *and* Boccace *men moſt inquiſitive, omitted to mention it, the whole Story was to be thought an incredible fiction. But here a* matter of Fact, *and of far greater concern,* the palpable change of Chriſtian Doctrin *from what it was anciently, is ſuppoſed to enter the World, not mentioned by any one Author friend or enemy, Therefore according to the Dr, it is to be judged a forged tale, a meer whimſy, improbable, and incredible. Much more then this comes to, I urged againſt the Dr, and here remind him of his grand Omiſſion, for to this very day, though he pretend's to anſwer my book's, yet he never medled with this one point, moſt weighty, and of greateſt*

Diſc. 2. P. 451.

Impor-

Importance. I *call it* weighty, *for upon theſe unanſwerable proofs, Proteſtancy is ruin'd, and the Church no leſſe demonſtratively cleared from that unjuſt calumny of altring Her Doctrin, which She received from Chriſt and his Apoſtles.*

But the greateſt Omiſſion of all, where the Dr's dull proceeding with me appear's moſt, remain's yet untouched. Thoſe who have read my laſt Treatiſes know, that the chiefeſt thing I inſiſted upon, and aimed at, was to prove à Truth which muſt ſtand, or Chriſtian Religion fall's to nothing. It is, the Roman Catholick Churches Infallibility in every Doctrin She obliges Chriſtians to believe. *I told the Dr. if all Paſtors all Biſhops, and the Church with them, be ſo fallible in delivering Chriſtian Doctrin, that when it is ultimately applyed to the Hearers, the Doctrin may be falſe, God never ſent them to teach it. I proved the Aſſertion. God ſent not Chriſt our Lord, nor Chriſt his Apoſtles, nor the Apoſtles others, to teach any Doctrin but that which relies upon the* first Verity *infallibly revealing truth, but ſuch à Doctrin can neither be fallible nor falſe, but moſt true and infallible, if therefore the Church teaches not that Doctrin as it is* true *and* Infallible, *but may change it into meer fallible and perhaps falſe Doctrin, She ceaſes,* eo ipſo, *to be à Church, and all the Doctors that teach ſo, are*

Protes: without Princ: Diſc. 1. c, 2, n. 9.

no

no Catholick Doctors. Moreover I said, If God hath not purposely made Religion a matter of eternal debate; if he has not cast Christians upon endless uncertainties what to believe; if both the Truth and Infallibility of his revealed Doctrin, stand firmly upon the first Verity (not separable there) and be revealed for this end, that all assent to it, as it is true and Infallible; If finally the very fundamentals of Faith necessary for Salvation, as registred in Holy Writ, be still liable to disputes amongst the learned of different Religion; If these things be, as they all are, clear Evidences; Nothing can be more manifest, than that the All-seing Providence hath impowred some Oracle, to compose such strifes raised among Christians, and to teach Christ's Doctrin as it deserves to be taught, truly and infallibly. These Arguments with many others not to be repeated, I have clearly proposed, and often Called on Mr D^r to reply, but in the very nick and occasion when he found himself obliged to answer, he warily slip's aside to another By-question about the resolution of Faith, and there, forsooth, because the matter of its own nature is hard, and speculative, not easily understood by every vulgar Reader, he thought he might well lie hid, free from the Censure of such men whom he court's, though he speake, as he often doth plainly from the purpose. Whereas, had he proceeded downright, and directly fallen upon

Reas: and Relig: Disc. 2. c. 19. n. 12.

upon my reaſons alledged in behalfe of the Churches Infallibility, every judicious Reader (though little verſed in ſpeculative Learning) would have ſoon ſeen, whether of us (I in arguing or he in his anſwers) deſerved reproof, and ſtood grounded upon better Principles. Notwithſtanding this pretty Subterfuge, the Dr hath got little by waving the main Queſtion, for I have followed him cloſely in the Speculative matter he lead's me to, and made it manifeſt, that he neither hitt's upon the right reſolution of Faith, nor indeed underſtand's where the real difficulty lies. One thing yet remain's, and I much wonder the Dr never mealed with it. I ſaid, who ever impeaches the Roman Catholick Church of errour in points of Faith, is ſure to be worſted in every rational Conteſt held upon that ſubiect, and ought to own the ſuppoſed errour ſo remedileſs an Evil, that it muſt remain as it is, without all hope of bettering it. The Aſſertion ſtand's firm upon this ground. No man can rationally charge errour upon a whole Church (never cenſured by any in former Ages, but known and condemned Hereticks) without Principles more convincing, weighty, and ponderous than the Churches Sole Authority is. But there are no Principles in Being powerful enough to uphold any ſuch diſcourſe; and not to make long work about a manifeſt Truth, pray tell me, whither can the Dr goe for Principles, whereby the Church is proved ſo much as liable

Reaſ: and Relig: Diſc. 2.c. 5. n. 5.

to

to errour? *Will he take recourse to the unanimous consent of Fathers? The attempt is desperate, while they generally teach quite contrary Doctrin, as is amply proved in my two last Treatises. Nay more, can the Dr produce one ancient Father, who saies plainly the Roman Catholick Church can err? I will return him hearty thanks if he point out one, but suppose (which is false) one or two glance at any such thing, have their doubtful words, thinke ye, force enough to Counterpoise the Authority of So renowned an Oracle as this Church is? Say I beseech you, what if one or two English Dr's should boldly tell us, that the nine and thirty Articles are matters of Divine Faith, and that all who teach the Doctrin, are by Divine Assistance made Infallible Oracles, is this sufficient to overthrow the Sentiment of the whole English Church, which hold's Herselfe* fallible *in delivering the Doctrin She maintains? No certainly. Much less, say I, can the Authority of one or two Fathers, only supposed (not proved) of a different opinion in judging the Roman Catholick Church* errable, *availe one whit to make it probable, that She is guilty of errour or liable to it, when contrary to Protestants, both She and all the learned Dr's of one Faith with her, boldly assert She cannot erre. Hence I infer, that no Authority taken from this or that ancient Father, much less from this or that private man, can rationally oppose the Church in her just claim to Infallibility,* The

Se Reas: and Relig: Disc: 2. c. 14. n. 10. 11.

The next Principle the Dr and others use to rely on, is taken from General Councils approved by the Church. How I beseech you, or in what manner? Did any Council ever yet expressly define, that the Church can err? You will say no, but these Councils contradict one another, and no infallible Oracle doth so. The weakest Pretence and least worth of any. *For doth not Holy Scripture also seemingly speak contradictions in many Passages? You will say, though they appear like Contradictions, yet learned men have already cleared such Antilogies. Besides Scripture is God's word, and all know that God cannot contradict himselfe. Very right; this is my Answer also. The learned of our Church have over and over cleared all such passages in Councils as appear to some short sighted eyes contradictions, from all opposition, and we more assuredly know, that the Roman Catholick Church is God's own infallible Oracle, than any Sectary can shew by reason, that Scripture is the word of God, or written by* Divine Inspiration. *Please now to compare Principles together. The Dr impeaches this Church of errour, and takes his proofs from the seeming Contradictions of Councils. A Catholick Adversary no less learned than he, solves all the Dr Obiects. The Church, while these two Combatants are hot at work, stand's by, and positively declares, She never delivered contrary Doctrin in any*

of

of her Councils. Here is the Clear Catholick Principle. *Against this Principle the Dr makes his exceptions, which thousands and thousands as learned as he, judge to be feeble, forceless, and long since ruined Fallacies. The Question is now, and tis worth the while to drive it on further, because it is most useful in all debates with Sectaries.* The Question I say is, *who shall judge in this Contest between the Church and this Dr, with all his exceptions? Have we means to know who speaks truth in so weighty à matter, and upon whom the errour lies? To clear this you shall se how indifferently I proceed, I will as yet, neither suppose the Church nor the Dr blamable, but leave this to the just trial of some Iudge, let that Iudge be named, and much is done. The Church never censured by any Orthodox Christian, and defended by the most learned in the World, think's her own Authority worth something, and powerful enough to bear up her cause against à single Dr, with all his crew of Sectaries, but let that be yet disputable, whither will the Dr lead us for à final Sentence in this yet debatable case? Has he any* ancient Church, *any* consent of Fathers, *any* one word *of* Scripture, *any* received Tradition, *whereby he evinces the Church errable in her Councils. These are excellent Principles, but I absolutely assert he has none of them; not one was ever yet*

produced

produced by him, nor shall hereafter be brought to light while the world stands, as is clearly made out both in this, and my former Treatises. Contrarywise, it is certain that the Church and all her learned Doctors plead strongly by every one of these Principles, therefore She stands upon surer grounds than the Dr, who as, I now said, has none of them. The Dr may reply, These very Scriptures and Fathers, the Church pleads by for her not erring, are only doubtful proofs, and therefore convince nothing. I answer if these be doubtful, the Dr's Assertion, while he saith They are doubtful, *is I am sure* no selfe-evident *Truth, but (either utterly false) or at least fearfully doubtful, and therefore must be proved by a stronger Principle, than his own proofless word. Leave us not now, Mr Dr, in darkness, give us, I beseech you, some light of that Principle, or ultimate proof, whereby it may appear, that you speak truth, or so much as Sence when you tell us:* All our proofs alledged in behalfe of the Churches Infallibility, are doubtfull and controverted. *Name the Church, the Fathers, or Councils (Scripture you have none) that speak as you do. You may introduce Sectaries who say so, but they come unarmed without Scripture, Church-authority, Fathers, or Tradition, and to these* (men of yesterday), *we oppose thousands more ancient on our side. Thus,*

Mr

Mr Dr, we proceed in every other particular Controverſy, and will ſhew you when you pleaſe, ſo non-plus't, and ſoon driven to an end of all diſcourſe for want of Principles, that the ultimate proofs of your Aſſertions, whether you defend Proteſtancy, or impugn Catholick Religion, *Shall at laſt be brought to nothing* but to your own bare, naked, and unproved Aſſertions themſelves, *which ſtand tottering*, unprincipled. *Now that you may ſe I ſpeak ſeriouſly, I challenge you once more, to diſcuſſe with me this particular Queſtion concerning the* Churches Infallibility, *and if after all you have ſaid, or can ſay, I make not vvhat is here aſſerted, manifeſt, I vvill acknovvledge my errour before the vvhole vvorld. The ground I ſtand upon is ſolid, and in à vvord thus. All Principles imaginable (plain Scripture excepted vvhereof there is no danger) thought fit to carry on à diſcourſe againſt our Churches Doctrin, vvill be at the very moſt, (if they get ſo high) dubious only and uncertain, uſually polish't with Sectaries gloſſes, But it is evident, that unprincipled Gloſſes ſet upon doubtful Authorities, are too trivial and forceleſs to vveaken or to diſcountenance à long ſtanding Church in the juſt claim ſhe laies to Infallibility, She* by her Selfe, *is ſtrong enough to vvithſtand ſuch feeble* Effort's, *and more than theſe come to*, you never yet had, *nor ſhall have* hereafter

This great truth, I intend to enlarge further upon another Occaſion.

from Sectaries. Nothing therefore ever appeared to me more simple and senseless, than is the desperate attempt of Novellists, who will, forsooth, reform a Church in points of Faith, *before they have so much as probability of their own halfe* well-done *Reformation; But this, (though exception enough) is not all, there is yet more against them. Observe well. Sectaries are confessedly fallible, and upon that account, may not only spoil all they take in hand to mend, but morally speaking, seem necessitated to do so, because nothing in nature* (or what reason dictates) *nothing in Grace* (or what God hath revealed) *nothing that Antiquity ever taught, can yeild them so much as the least* glimpse *of any Principle, to reform the Church by. O! this want of Principles ruin's our Dr. Hence proceed's his intolerable Shuffling, his empty dispirited, and faint strain in writing, all along as visible to a judicious Reader, as the paper is he cast's his eyes upon; All along, lame and halting, yet hauty* (that must help out) *and disdainful. Hence is, that where he should prove, he fall's to Drollery, and when he cannot answer, he either reviles his Adversary, or quite leaves the difficulty. Hence finally it is, that his great Design in writing Controversies, is not only blasted, but utterly broken, for either he intended his own credit by Scribling, and that to my certain*

These particulars are demonstrated in the Treatise following

know-

nowledge is loſt even among no ſmall number
f his own Brethren; or hoped to gain ſome
roſelytes from Catholick Religion, to that
roteſtancy he profeſſes, herein he is beguiled,
nd has caught none, but chaſed away ſome
ng under his tutoring, to ſeek Satisfaction els
here, which at laſt they found, by reading
oſe very Catholick books he contemn's. And
us, Courteous Reader, you ſe how unſuc-
ſful men are that run on headlong in their
nſetled wayes, and write Controverſies of Reli-
on without Principles. The Arguments
itherto compendiouſly ſet down, and many
ore, I have propoſed in my former Treatiſes,
nd thought the Dr would at leaſt have nibled
, or taken notice of ſome, but he was ſo wiſe
to paſs by them, yet you muſt believe, or
e will grow angry, that he has anſwered my
oks, or to uſe his own phraſe, drawn off
l the Spirit he could find in them. If
e Phancy pleaſe, let him play with it.

Having ſaid thus much of the Dr's Omiſ-
ons, or his conſtant waving what I have
ged againſt him, we are now to lay forth
ne few of his Commiſſions, methinks,
ainſt the rule of right Reaſon and common
vility. And firſt his endleſs Drollery, and
ter foul Language dealt frankly among
Adverſaries, after many fair Pro-
iſes to the Contrary, is unexcuſable.

Had they been men of clouts, no mala
tongue could have used them worse.
how He court's them. One is like
blinde man running à Tilt, ano
more wary steal's quite behind the D
book, and begin's to confute it at
wrong end. One is the knight, and
solving to encounter the Dragon, bu
les on his armour, mounts his stead,
direct's his lance into the Dragons mo
another is the Squire following a
convenient distance who had à Spi
the Dragons tail, and without fear
wit fall's unmercifully upon it, and in
opinion, hath chop't it into à thous
pieces. One, à young Sophister,
his Pamphlet and dapper piece, bid's
be of good heart, for by letting flie s
Squibs, and crackers, he doubted
but to put the Monster into such à r
as to make him fall upon himselfe;
other full of phlegm, is to be dealt
roughly in due time and place.
set's forth à railing book, which
perhaps be answered at leasure, tho
Mr Dr loves not, to have to do
madmen, no not in their lucid in
vals, another glories in his pusion
with à sheet and half of paper &c.
much for an Essay *only, the following Tr*
se as occasion fall's out, will afford more.

w theſe and the like piquant expreſ-
ns, laid before the Doctors eyes, vvhat
s he? Marry, he manfully vowes, and
ouches in one Preface, He writes ſober-
, as becomes an Ingenuous Adver-
y; that he is far from throwing
t into mens faces, that ſmartneſs
expreſſion, is like throwing of vineger
hot coals, that ſoon vaniſhes into
oak. *So it muſt be in the Dr's new Dia-*
. Though he call's men, blinde, ſtupid,
d, *and* witleſs, *yet all is Moderate, gentle,*
d vvell ordered Language. You have
re in another Preface. He will not,
ſooth, ſo much as deſire God to rebuke
em, No; he has learned from one,
o when he was reviled, reſviled not
ain, not only to forbear from repro-
ning, but to return good for evil, and
pray for them *&c. It ſeem's he has*
rned his leſſon vvell, vvhen to ieer, taunt,
d ſcorn, to talk of Knights and Squires, is
roduced by him, as à new Form of praying.
enough of this levity and ſhuttleneſs, the
's head is too full of it. Add hereunto,
vain, and intolerable boaſting, even vvhen
s moſt shamfully baffled by his Adverſaries,
you may juſtly vvonder. I will briefly
e à glance at one or two paſſages relating to
ers, vvhat concerns my ſelfe, you will find
he Treatiſe. I. W. an excellent Divine,

Dr Stillingfleet, against Dr Stillingfleet.

Part. 2. Page 24

ſmartly and learnedly in his short but nerv
Treatiſe, makes uſe of what the Dr grant
Viz. That Catholicks are in a tr
way to Salvation, and Conſequentl
having conformed to its directions
may be ſaved. The Sophiſtry of th
ſaith Mr Dr, is ſo palpable that t
vveakeſt eye may diſcern it, for it ſuppo
the true vvay to Salvation, to be a ve
ſafe and ſecure way. *I anſwer, the Su*
poſition is moſt right, vvithout any shad
of Sophiſtry, for the true *vvay*, (as truc
lead's none into errour, and upon that accou
muſt be ſafe and ſecure, *becauſe nothing*
found in a true vvay, but truth and Sec
rity. *Swerve not therefore from the true v*
vvhich certainly lead's to Salvation, it is i
poſsible to leave off the ſafe and ſecure w
P. 45. to it. *O! but, ſaith our Dr*, The doi
all that is neceſſary to Salvation, is n
bare believing the neceſſary articles
Faith contained in the Creeds, but o
eying the will of God, which cann
be done by thoſe who wilfully adhere
groſs and open violations of it. *Her*
Sophiſtry enough, and much Non-ſence beſi
Speak out Dr, and tell us; whether theſe ſupp
ſed groſs and open violations of God's W
quite caſt Catholicks out of the true way
Salvation, or yet permit them to walk in
Grant the firſt, you mercileſly throw them i
a damnable Condition, *upon this very*
co

count *that they are now thought by you out of the true way of Salvation, which yet your judgement of charity (as you call it) allowes them, because they still retain* the Essentials of true Faith, and live conformable to them. *Say.* 2. (*and you must say it*) *that these Supposed gross and open violations, are consistent with their living in the* true essential way to Salvation, *those who follow this way are in spight of all opposition in* a safe and most secure way, *because, as I said, the true way* is safe *and cannot damn any, that conform their lives and actions to it. Your errour, Mr D^r, lies here, that you unwarily stretch these supposed violations too farr, and make them do what they cannot do; That is not only to* Obstruct, *but also to* cut off *the true way of Salvation from Catholicks, which is impossible, unless you destroy your own ground* and Supposition *with it, in granting plainly, they may be saved in their Religion. What I assert here is evident. Lay before you, Mr D^r, on the one side, all those errours or actions you account gross.* Worshipping Images, Idolatry, praying to Saints, Transubstantiation *with the rest, and distinguish well between these, and those other you call* the Essentials of Faith *owned and believed by all Catholicks. The belief of these Essentials, and living Conformable to them can damn none, as you grant. I ask now, whether their* worshipping Images, *their* maintaining Transubstantiation *&c. put's them in a*

damnable

damnable condition, *or openly hazard's their Salvation?* *Affirm; and you hurry them*, eo ipso *out of the* true way, *vvhich yet you, and your Bishop freely allow them to vvalk in. Say contrary, that the Particular Tenents now mentioned, damn them not, your Iudgement of Charity, leaves them ſtill in the true vvay to Salvation vvhich cannot, if followed, but ſave them*, unleſs you will have them ſaved and damned at once, Saved; by the true way they follow, and damned alſo by reaſon of their particular Tenents. *This diſcourſe I hold demonſtrative, and ſo I do all*
P. 19. *the reſt, ſtrongly propoſed by. I. W. againſt your empty way in anſwering his Arguments. Now one vvord briefly to your* judgement of Charity. *You account this Adverſary diſingenuous becauſe, ſay you*, he barely oppoſes à judgement of Charity concerning their Church, to à Iudgement of reaſon concerning the nature of actions. *A more ridiculous diſtinction never came from Doctor. Firſt, Charity being an act of the Will, judges not, but is ever regulated by à rational prudent judgement, even in circumſtances, vvhen* by crrour *vve are deceived, as if one charitably give an Almes to à ſeeming poor man, vvho is à counterfeit, the Iudgement that regulates Charity, is both prudent and rational.* Ergo, *vvhen you, Sr, Iudge Catholicks in à true vvay to Salvation becauſe they ſtill retain*

the

the Essentials of a true Church, your judgement is either prudent and rational, *or your Charity ceases to be real Charity. Again, If you prudently judge them in a damnable condition by reason of their supposed Idolatry and other wilful errours, its no prudent Charity but madness, to allow them Salvation upon any* other account *what ever. So it is, if you judge a vicious abhominable Liver in all wickedness, lyable by his lewd Courses to damnation, you cannot by any other prudent rational judement (unless he repent) yeild, that he is in the true way of Salvation. But Catholicks, Say you, by reason of their gross and open Violations in not obeying the Will of God, are lyable to damnation (gross and open Violations of God's will deserve no better), Therefore you cannot by any other* prudent rational judgement *grant, that they are in the true way to Salvation. A plain Answer to what I Shall now demand will clear the whole matter. Are Catholicks in the true way of Salvation upon their retaining the Essentials of Faith and living Conformable to them? This your* prudent and rational Charity *allowes them, or it* allowes nothing. *Again, are they out of the true way to Salvation, or in a damnable Condition, by reason of their wilful errours and gross violations of God's will? Admit this also, and your prudent rational Charity, quite blown up, vanishes into Smoak, because*

you

you put men in à State of Salvation who deſerve it not. Here in à word, Sr, is à Dilemma for you and all I would ſay. If you, by your prudent rational Charity, judge Catholicks may be ſaved, notwithſtanding theſe groſſer Violations now mentioned, you cannot by that other judgement of reaſon Concerning the nature of actions, *make them lyable to damnation. Contrarywiſe, if by this Judgement of reaſon, you account them liable to damnation, you cannot, by that other prudent rational judgement of Charity, place them in à State or in à Condition of Salvation. The reaſon hereof is clear: Two quite Contrary Judgements pronounced with the ſame breath, the one tending to damn men, the other to ſave them, in the Same unvariable Circumſtances, cannot be true or reaſonable. The one therefore muſt neceſſarily be raſh, imprudent, and unreaſonable. Thus much in effect, your learned Adverſary. I. W. by the force of Arguing extort's from you, Though in ſtead of returning thanks for his pains in laying down your errours, you uſe him more like à ſlave and varlet, than an Ingenuous Adverſary, and this, Mr Dr, is your ordinary trick, when moſt Pinched, you are then moſt peevish and teſtie, with thoſe you deal with. Fie for ſhame man, what an uncivil Apoſtrophe have you directed to. I. W? Hark, Reader, how it thunder's, how he is ſent away with*

à

à Vengeance. Go thy way then for the eight Champion of Chriſtendom, enioy the benefit of thy illuſtrious fame, ſit down at eaſe, and relate to thy immortal honour, thy mighty exploits; only when thou haſt done, remember thou haſt encountred nothing but the wind-mills of thy own imagination, and the man, whom thou though'ſt to have executed by his own hands, ſtand's by and laugh's at thy ridiculous attempts. Sardonius riſus, *much talk't of, is only grinning, or à feigned laughter, laugh on, if you like it, all will end in ſorrow at laſt, for believe it, Mr Dr,* Vlciſcentur te mores tui. *I ſay no more, but only crave the Reader to tell me, whether theſe diſdainful expreſſions may paſs current for one of the Dr's devout prayers, promiſed his Adverſaries? Much more I have to ſay in behalf of others, moſt notoriouſly injured by this Adverſary. The learned and worthy Doctor. T. G. both abuſed and miſtaken, hath à ſhare with the reſt, as will be evidenced in this Treatiſe, Chap. 4. n. 20. But ſtay Reader, I have all this while caſt an eye upon our Dr's writings, to ſee where Satisfaction is given. A. B. who excellently well makes it out and ſolidly proves, what he aſſerts, Viz. That Dr St. is à very Fanatick, as right an Enthuſiaſtick in Judgement and Beliefe, as any one in all England, yet after à diligent ſearch have met with no anſwer to the Author of that pithy letter.*

Part. 1. P. 71.

A. B's. firſt letter Page 3. and 4.

Thoſe

These things and many more would time permit I should insist upon, and must though it lengthen's the Preface à little, take notice of one particular, the fouleſt, and moſt groſs, I ever read in any. You have it in the Doctors General Preface, *where he bitterly inveigh's against the Doctrin of Attrition, which the Church and all Catholicks hold, though* by it ſelfe *it justifies not, yet in the Sacrament of Penance* it diſpoſes à Sinner to impetrate and obtain the Grace of God. *VVhether it be à full ſufficient diſpoſition in the Sacrament to grace without Contrition, is another Queſtion. Now comes the Dr and demand's.* How do They (*the damned*) want the Sacrament of Penance in Hell, for no doubt there is Attrition good ſtore there. The Sacrament of Penance in Hell, Dr! Attrition good ſtore in Hell! *I read theſe words with horrour, and ſtand aſtonish't at this heights of ſtupidity. Pray, Sr, who can abſolve in Hell? VVhat Divels? Or who are there capable of Abſolution? Damned Souls? Anſwer I beſeech you. Are ſuch Souls in your opinion capable of Baptiſm, or of that you call the Lords Supper? You will ſay no. In like manner ſay I, and ſpeak with the whole Chriſtian world, they are as uncapable of the Sacrament of Penance. Sacraments, Good Sr, ſerve only for the living on their* way to Eternity,

General Preface Paulo ante medium.

See the Council of Trent, Seſs 14, c 4. Dum tamen ad Dei gratiam in Sacramento diſponit.

nity, *and benefit none departed this life.* O! *but Attrition, whereof there is good ſtore in Hell, troubles the* Dr. *Here you have alſo the like groſs Ignorance, and therefore I anſwer in a word. If the* Dr *call eternal horrour, everlaſting ſhame, and deſpair,* Attrition, *he may find great ſtore indeed, but theſe miſeries inſeparably attending the damned, are as remote from that* Attrition *which the* Church *and* Catholicks *maintain, as Hell is from Heaven. The* Catholick *attrition, as the* Council *now cited, declares, is* Dei donum, *the gift of God, wrought in a Soul by the* impulſe, and motion of the Holy Ghoſt, *and though it tend's upon a leſs perfect Motive than* Contrition, *yet it is a Supernatural Operation. If you,* Mr Dr, *ſpeak not of this Attrition, you fight with Shadowes, and touch not* Catholick Doctrin. *I might in this place alſo ſhow, how groſly the* Dr *is miſtaken in his quoting* Gregory de Valentia, *but I haſten to my own affaires, and ſhall briefly tell you, how and in what manner I proceed with this Adverſary*

The Dr, *you know, hath employed himſelf and time upon two very different Subiects, the one hard and Speculative, the other more eaſy, containing matters of Fact, ſet forth with this Title.* An Enquiry into the Miracles of the Church of Rome. *In this firſt Part I follow him as he goes along,*

and reply to his Cavils, not one I am sure (if any be worth notice, as few are) is omitted by me. I discover also his Shuffling, and as occasion fall's out, mind him here and there of what he should prove, though he never doth it. I shew moreover, that the grand Principle he relies on, called a Faculty of discerning, allowed every one to judge of the Scriptures Sence in the most necessary points concerning Salvation, is not only evidently unsound, but likewise highly injurious to God, and Truth, for by it he licences every Arian every Anabaptist every Fanatick, and Quaker, who have as good discerning Faculties as the Dr can glory in, to uphold that Sence they draw from Scripture, and maintain it as true, though false and heretical, and this, forsooth, is done, because malice will not brook God's own Oracle to teach, when we stand most in need of Instruction. After my grounds given for the Churches Infallibility, I urge the Doctor to produce a Proof from any received Principle, whereby it may but probably appear, that a Church once confessedly Orthodox and right in Faith, is errable, or ever erred. In that speculative Contest about Faith transcending the certainty of Motives, I evince, that not only the Dr doth de facto, but all others must subscribe to the truth I Propugn, and

own

own it as an undiſputable Verity. Much more I have againſt the Doctor, better known by à full peruſal of the Treatiſe, than by any Summary laid before the Reader in à ſhort Preface. In caſe he will reioyn, I wiſh him (what ere becomes of the reſt) not to paſs over my two laſt Chapters, where firſt, I largely inſiſt upon that he call's his rational Evidence *of Chriſtian Religion, which I ſhew every way defective, and beſides demonſtrate, that the true Evidence for Chriſtianity is not (as the Dr would have it) either deſtroyed, or in the leaſt meaſure endamaged by the Doctrin of* Tranſubſtantiation. *In the* 10th *and laſt Chapter, I diſcover the Dr's too manifeſt errour in his unskilful charging à vicious Circle on us, while we reſolve our Catholick Faith. I tell him (which he knowes not) what a vicious Circle eſſentially implies, and demonſtratively clear the Church from all ſhadow and danger of à Circle. May it pleaſe the Dr to give me Satisfaction in theſe two main matters, now Specified, (My exceptions againſt him are plain) and alſo vouchſafe, to ſolve another difficulty propoſed in this Treatiſe, concerning the means Chriſt has left, to bring all open Diſſenters in the fundamentals of Faith or Neceſſaries for Salvation, to one beliefe, that is, to underſtand the true genuin Sence*

of

of God's Word, without an Infallible Church. May it, I say please the Dr to do only that much, I will not only highly applaude his labours, but freely quit him of blame, though he trifle never so much with me in his Answers to the rest of this Treatise. Now in case he take courage to reply (whereof I doubt very much) it is hard to say what humour he will be in, what Vizor or Shape he may assume. Perchance he will appear with his pageant-like piety, and renew his promises of writing fairly, as becomes an Ingenuous Adversary. Very good, if he answer as fairly, and home, I am well content. It may be quite contrary; he will bear me down with bigg words, and call me Philosophical fool, witless fellow, brainless, Saucy, bold, and all that naught is. No matter, say I, if he answer's my objections, I can digest all. It may be, he will without much notice taken of my Arguments repeat all, or the most he has said already (it is a usual trick of Sectaries) and entitle that an Answer to this Treatise, if so; he will need no great Sophist to lay open the cheat. But what if he take Pet? What if passion and ignorance drive him into a humour of Contempt? What if he lay all thought of answering aside, and Satisfy some few of his own Gange by an odd Querie, as he once did? Cannot a dull book come out with my name in the Title, but I must be obliged to answer

it?

t? No, I assure them, I know better how to spend my time. *Well, Courteous Reader, if he run this way, I have done, and say no more but what all will vow, that the Oyle of the Doctors lampe is well nigh, if not wholly spent. Among the many wayes here briefly hinted at, time, I hope, may tell us how he will behave himself. I expect his Answer.*

A word now if you please, of what I shall handle hereafter. Dr. Still: hath published two spiteful ridiculous Treatises, justly offensive to every Iudicious man, the one is his simple charge of Idolatry shamefully and without judgement laid upon the Roman Catholick Church, thanks be to God he hath been soundly baffled for it. The other is his wild Enquiry after Miracles vvrought in the same great Moral body of Christians, and this I engage to answer, though indeed, the juggling, the palpable Sophistry, the manifest falsities vvherewith that vvhole Discourse is seasoned, return you the best Answer, and plainly tell you The Enquiry made by him, *is in a vvord vvorth nothing, abating this one point, that it exposes the Author, as he deserves, to publick contempt. VVhat in Gods name, came into the Dr's head, to vvrite as he hath done against all Miracles? Many Protestants, I am sure (as you shall see afterward) ingenuously acknowledge true Miracles to have been vvrought in the Roman Catholick Church, others of the*

worser sort, allow at least an appearance of them. though perhaps done by the help of Divels, but the D^r seem's in Several Passages not to allow us so much as the outward Semblance of a Miracle. and all along own's not one of them, true. What shall we say to this man. Will he grant that the Iewes had true Miracles among them, and deny the like Grace and Priviledge to the Christian Church? Will he allow the gift of working Miracles to two great Prophets, Enoch and Elias at their appearing again, when the Church will be neer an end. and take from her all Signs, all true Miracles, during the vast space of time between the Apostles, and the latter dayes of these two Prophets? Will he say (and he must say it) when Antichrist comes, that, that false Prophet will do strange wonders; yea in appearance great Miracles, though all rotten and full of guile: and shall Christ's own Spouse, the true Christian Church be so abased, so vilely thought of, by one that professes Christianity, as never to have wrought by God's special favour so much as one true Miracle; never to have Shewed any other wonder but what Divels have done, and Antichrist will do by his charm's, when he comes to delude the World? Gentle Reader, these things are horrid, and better befit a Professient in Atheism, than one that bear's the name of a Christian. But more of this in the Treatise, where I shall

shall discover the Dr's intolerable fraudes which run through his whole Discourse, and show also, what Catholicks understand by Church Miracles wherein the Dr grosly err's, for he thinks every uncertain Story, related by this or that too credulous Author (often censured by the Church) passes amongst us for a Church Miracle. There is no such matter, the Miracles we chiefly rely on and defend, are rigidly examined, attested by oath, and made every way so morally certain before they gain Approbation, that no man in prudence can call them into doubt. Those other, related by private Authors, are either probable, dubious, or manifestly false. *If all Circumstances Considered, they appear* probable, *we own them as such, and go no further: If* dubious; *we suspend our judgements and leave them in that uncertain Condition:* If false, *(which is easily known upon Examination) we utterly reject them. The rest that belongs to this weighty matter Concerning Miracles you shall have, God willing, hereafter, part whereof is added to this Treatise. The remainder, I hope, will follow, before many Months come to an End.*

Farewel, Courteous
READER.

THE CHAPTERS OF THE FIRST PART.

CHAP. I. *What moved the Author to write this short Treatise? How weakly Dr Stilling: trifles with his Adversaries; A touch of the Dr's new way in Arguing. Of his simple exception against the word Infallibility. How the Infallibility in the first Propounders of Faith depend's upon the present Guides of the Church?* Pag. 1

CHAP. II. *A few Considerations premised concerning Infallibility. Expres Scripture proves The Church Infallible. No one word for her Fallibility alleged by the Dr. An Argument proposed against the Doctor.* 32

CHAP. III. *Doctor Stilling fleets Rule and ground of faith, proved no Rule. It lessens not in the least the Churches Infallibility.* 42

CHAP. IV. *Doctor Still: Arguments answered. His unintelligible jumbling discovered. A word briefly of the ground of the Churches*

Churches Infallibility. The Churches Guides teach infallibly. 61

CHAP. V. *Doctor Stilling fleets pretended Answer to E: W: Two books, Protestancy without Principles, and Reason and Religion, shew'd no Answer, but à meer shuffling, or palpable digression from the main point handled in those Treatises. How the Dr shift's off the only difficulty, wherein satisfaction is required?* 96

CHAP. VI. *Dr Stilll: grant's that Faith transcend's the Certainty of those Motives which induce to believe. Independently of his concession, that verity is proved, and the ground thereof firmly setled. How necessary it is to distinguish between the Credibility of à Mystery, and the infallible believing it true. Objections answered. Other difficulties proposed.* 123

CHAP. VII. *Reflections made upon the Doctors following Discourse. Of his Mistakes concerning the Churches Testimony, and the obscurity of Faith.* 154

CHAP. VIII. *The Doctor's Discourse from page 400, to P. 416. Considered, and found weightless.* 174

CHAP. IX. *Dr Stilling: pretended Evidence for Christian Religion proved nothing like Evidence. His Evidence taken from Sense in the Mystery of the holy Eucharist demonstrated Senseless. How vainly he endeavour's*

vour's to prove by Miracles related in Scripture the Truth of the Doctrin there registred. A word of his Tradition, and many other errours. 193
Of the Dr's errour in conveying to us by Tradition, what Christ did, and spake. 226
CHAP. X. The Church proved Infallible before She interpret's Scripture. The reason hereof. The Doctors groſs errour in charging a Circle on us, in the Reſolution of Faith. What a vicious Circle implies, and how it differ's from a rational Regreſs in Diſcourſe. 236

THE CHAPTERS OF THE SECOND PART.

CHAP. I. How I formerly argued in behalfe of our Churches Miracles. The Dr in his Enquiry waves my Arguments. Of the difference between Christ's Miracles, and thoſe wrought by the Apoſtles, and in the Church. What is meant by Church Miracles. Of the Cheats which run

though the Dr's whole Enquiry. 3
The Miraculous Translation of the Chappel of Loreto, defended against the Doctor. Authorities for the Translation, Produced. 14
CHAP. II. Of the Dr's proceeding against me. What he supposes, destroies it selfe. What weight Church Miracles have? None of wit or judgement ever contradicted them. How the Dr juggles in appealing to Apostolical Miracles. The Miraculous Translation of the sacred house of Loreto, manifestly proved against the Dr's weak and unworthy Cavils. 19
CHAP. III. The Dr's ridiculous cavils at Teremanus his Table, shew'd Nonsence. The main Objection against the Chappels Translation, proposed, and solved. A difficulty moved Concerning the strange Translation of Protestancy into Germany and England. 37
CHAP. IV. More witnesses produced for the Chappels Translation. Whether Baronius proves Pope Ioan to have never been, by a Negative Argument, or Silence meerly? Of the Dr's gross Errours and unworthy dealing 45
CHAP. V. The Dr's frivolus Objections against the Miracles wrought at Loreto, dissolved. A word of his other frauds. 68

COURTEOUS

COVRTEOVS READER

The Printer of this Treatiſe, is Wholly ignorant of the English tongue, many faults therefore have ſlipped the preſſe, Some are already Charitably corrected by others, if more be found, pleaſe to mend, or pardon them.

ERRATA.

PART. I.

In the Title of the firſt 31 pages. For Trieſling, and &c, read trifling Page. 5. Line. 22. r. overcharged P. 13. l. 15 r. Scholler. P. 49. l. 30. r. Imaginable. p. 49 p. 202. Margent. r. of p. 212. l. 31. r. acquieſce.

PART. II.

P. 31. l. 28. r. taken thence. p 31. l. 16. r. appertaining p. 72. l. 12. r. Narration. p. 35. l. 16. r. thrown out. p. 78. l. 23. r. accuſeth p. 3. l. 10. r. humane. N. for. u and u. for n. h. for b. an. u. for. i. as unſufficient for inſufficient, pleaſe to correct, faults very diſcernable.